STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT INTERGOVERNMENTAL POLICY DIVISION

September 20, 2006

Members of the Continuing Legislative Committee on State Planning and Development:

The Honorable Eric D. Coleman

The Honorable Lewis J. Wallace, Jr.

The Honorable Jonathan A. Harris

The Honorable Leonard Fasano

The Honorable Craig A. Miner

The Honorable Joseph J. Crisco, Jr.

The Honorable Bill Finch

The Honorable Antonio (Tony) Guerrera

The Honorable Jack Malone

The Honorable Richard Roy

Dear Senators and Representatives:

The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) has received an application from the Town of Franklin for an interim change to the Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut, 2005-2010 (C&D Plan).

Franklin requests that an area currently designated as "Rural Lands" located east of Route 32 and west of industrial lands adjacent to the Norwich Industrial Park be changed to the "Growth" designation. In addition, Franklin has requested that a small area immediately abutting these Rural Lands and designated as "Conservation" also be changed to the "Growth" designation (see exhibit A in attached application package). The re-designation of these areas to "Growth" will allow the Town of Franklin to pursue opportunities to develop these lands for industrial and commercial use.

Pursuant to Regulations for Connecticut State Agencies, Section 16a-24b-3, the Town of Franklin or those exercising Planning and Zoning powers within the Town can request a joint public hearing on the application. However, as indicated in the attached application, the Town, acting through the Board of Selectmen and the Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Committee has waived the opportunity for such hearing.

As the right to a public hearing has been waived, OPM must make a recommendation on this application to the Continuing Legislative Committee on State Planning and Development within 10 days of this notice of receipt. We will be forwarding to you our

Phone: (860) 418-6484 Fax: (860) 418-6493 450 Capitol Avenue-MS# 54SLP, Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1308 recommendation within this time frame. The Continuing Committee has the responsibility to make the final decision on interim changes to the C&D Plan within thirty (30) days of receipt of OPM's recommendation.

Sincerely,

W. David LeVasseur, Undersecretary Intergovernmental Policy Division

Attachments

Cc: Senator Edith G. Prague, 19th Senatorial District
Representative Kevin Ryan, 139th House Assembly District
James Butler, Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
Matthew Davis, Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments
Richard Matters, First Selectman, Franklin
John McGuire, Chairman, Franklin Planning & Zoning Commission

Town of Franklin Office of the First Selectman

Franklin Town Hall 7 Meeting House Hill Road Franklin, Connecticut 06254

Mr. W. David LeVasseur, Under Secretary Intergovernmental Policy Division CT Office of Policy and Management 450 Capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106-1308

September 12, 2006

RE: Application for Interim Map Amendment to the State C&D Plan (2005-2009)

Dear Mr. LeVasseur,

On behalf of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Franklin, and with the concurrence of the Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission, I am submitting to you in triplicate the enclosed application to amend the State Plan of Conservation and Development (2005-2009) Locational Guide Map with respect to a portion of land in the southeast section of our Town. Please note that we are not requesting any change to the current State C&D Plan text.

As you may know, Franklin recently lost one of its major employers, who unfortunately relocated to Pennsylvania. That loss has had a major impact on our local tax base and employment. For a small Town, the impact has been devastating.

As a result, with the assistance of a Planner from SECCOG, local leadership has evaluated our current zoning and land use designations, with the objective of facilitating orderly economic growth in locations that are capable of accommodating such growth. In this way, we will be better prepared to take advantage of opportunities that might arise. This will hopefully help us mitigate some of the damage we've suffered by the loss of a major employer.

Specifically, we are asking the State's Continuing Committee on State Planning and Development and OPM for assistance, by approving a small, but important amendment to the State C&D Plan Locational Guide Map (see attached "Exhibit A"). More specifically, the Town would like the State to designate a portion of the area now shown as "Rural Lands" located east of Route 32 and west of industrial lands adjacent to the Norwich Industrial Park, to "Growth." As you can see, the rural designation creates an isolated "wedge" of land extending southerly into and separating the lands along this portion of Route 32, as well as the developed portions of the Norwich Industrial Park.

In addition, we are also requesting that a small area immediately abutting these lands (northerly) and shown as "Conservation" be included in the "Growth" category. This will allow the new designation to follow parcel boundaries, and facilitate more rational and consolidated potential development. As seen on the attached map, the overwhelming majority of this existing conservation area will remain. This designation was clearly assigned by OPM in order to promote retention of the farm within this "conservation" area. The portion of this area that we are requesting be changed to growth is currently wooded, isolated, sloped and does not contain soils suitable for cropland or pasture. In contrast, the area to remain is relatively flat, contiguous, presently farmed and contains suitable soils. The Town of Franklin takes great pride in its agricultural heritage. We have given careful consideration to the potential impacts of this request and firmly believe we have crafted a balanced and rational approach.

Franklin has long desired to develop the lands adjacent to the Norwich Industrial Park for industrial and commercial use. The subject lands have become available for development as a result of the termination of the agricultural operation (poultry farm). As you know, Franklin has an abundance of agricultural lands, and many active and successful large-scale commercial farms. These are located in less dense areas of Town, and are not in proximity to public utilities. To the contrary, Franklin has very little commercial and/or industrial land, with access to public utilities and other infrastructure (regional/State highways). Furthermore, the subject lands do not contain prime agricultural soils. In fact, the soils are very rocky and not able to support a viable farm operation, especially given other available lands with suitable soils. The subject lands are not suitable for rural residential use for the same reasons. Low-density residential use would not support the high cost of installing the necessary infrastructure and utilities. The poultry farm has not been in operation for many years and the owners have been unsuccessful in marketing the property for low-density residential use.

Therefore, after careful consideration, it is clear to the Board of Selectmen and to the Planning and Zoning Commission that a designation of "growth" is appropriate. We feel that this growth designation would be consistent with policy objectives contained in the State's C&D Plan. In essence, the use of this property for industrial development would be a form of orderly "infill."

A "growth" designation would also potentially allow Franklin to expand and diversify its tax base, while providing employment in a location that is immediately accessible to regional transportation systems, as well as available public water and public sewer facilities. It will assist Norwich Utilities by providing future income to support its operations. It would also benefit the State and region by leveraging major capital improvements made to Route 2 and other area highways. We believe this is exactly what the Legislature intended when it revised the Statutes to promote "smart growth" concepts.

In further support of our request, I've attached the following:

- Resolution in support by the Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission (8/29/06).
- 2. Vote in support by the Franklin Board of Selectmen (9/6/06).
- 3. Map showing current and requested State C&D Plan designations (Exhibit A).

Franklin C&D Plan excerpts in support of our request (2000 update).

The Regional C&D Plan is currently being updated. Franklin is coordinating with the RPC's staff to have the regional plan designate the subject area "growth." Our local C&D Plan is not a "geographic" plan in terms of land use designations, but rather a collection of land use and other policy objectives. As noted, the local PZC has reviewed the request and has offered its unqualified support.

Finally, we waive our right to a joint hearing and would greatly prefer that OPM expedite this request to the maximum possible extent. Again, this will better position Franklin to take advantage of potential opportunities as a means of mitigating the negative impacts of losing a major employer and taxpayer.

I'd be happy to speak to you or your staff to assist in expediting a favorable conclusion. Please feel free to contact me at your convenience. On behalf of the citizens and taxpayers of Franklin, I want to thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Richard Matters First Selectman

Town of Franklin

John McGuire Chairman

Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission

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CC w/attachments:

Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission

James Butler, SECCOG/RPC

Matthew J. Davis AICP, Town Planner John Bilda, P.E., Norwich Public Utilities

David Kalafa, OPM

Town of Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission Franklin Town Hall 7 Meeting House Hill Road

7 Meeting House Hill Road Franklin, Connecticut 06254

Whereas the Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission has been requested to review and render an opinion regarding a potential application to the State OPM for an interim change to the State C&D Plan Locational Guide Map (see attached Exhibit A); and

Whereas the subject lands are located in a developed, commercial and industrial portion of Franklin, having immediate access to public water, public sewer, natural gas, State Routes 32, and 2 and Interstate 395; and

Whereas the subject areas are located between two areas presently zoned, used and planned for commercial and industrial development, including the adjacent Norwich Industrial Park; and

Whereas the subject lands are unsuitable for either low density residential development or for agriculture, due to soils, slope, surrounding land uses and other factors; and

Whereas the potential future use of the subject lands will increase the town's tax base and help the Town provide necessary public services; and

Whereas such use will promote orderly growth and development of both the Town and the region, by locating such growth in areas that are capable of accommodating such growth; and

Whereas such use will allow the State, Region and Town to maximize the rate of return on major capital improvements to area transportation and utility systems; and

Whereas the Town has very limited sites for such uses, suitably located, of substantial scale and with necessary utilities and access; and

Whereas such use would be consistent with the policies and objectives of the Town's 2000 update to its Plan of Conservation and Development;

Therefore, be it resolved this 29th day of August 2006, that;

The Town of Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously resolves that the proposed changes to the State C&D Plan Locational Guide map depicted on Exhibit A are fully consistent with and will support the achievement of important Town goals and objectives relating to orderly development, employment, economic development and other land use matters under its purview. As such, the Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission issues its unconditional and affirmative endorsement of these changes and requests that the Franklin Board of Selectmen make formal application to the State OPM for these changes at its earliest possible convenience."

John McGuire, Chairman	Je J Mr III	
Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission	9/12/06	

REGULAR MEETING OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN BOARD OF SELECTMEN HELD AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7:00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2006

CALLED TO ORDER: First Selectman Richard Matters called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. PRESENT: Selectman William Postler and Selectman Thomas Curran.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS: Colby Melanec, and Town Planner: Matt Davis.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA- Mr. Matters added under New Business; Item F: Approval of PZC Request for Additional Funding. Mr. Matters made motion to add to the Agenda. Mr. Postler seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 6th BILLS- Mr. Postler made motion to approve bills as presented. Mr. Matters seconded. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 23rd MINUTES- Mr. Matters stated under Approval of July 12th Minutes, the amount Safeway is offering should state \$.075. Mr. Curran stated in the Public Works report, it should be corrected that the curbing was done on Eager Road. Mr. Curran also stated the 6th sentence should state "The mailboxes had to be moved as the Postmaster could not deliver mail and the Foreman should have been out there at the same time to compensate for it". He also stated the last sentence should state that the Public Works crew was short-handed of just the two men and not just the Foreman. Mr. Postler made motion to approve with noted corrections. Mr. Matters seconded. Motion carried.

REVIEW OF REPORTS:

FINANCIAL OFFICERS: Tax Collector- 52% collected so far. \$72,000 in back taxes not collected. Income: 32% collected as the State funding has not come through yet. The Board inquired if the Fire Department will be switching dispatching service from Williamntic Switchboard to KX or another service due to the problems of miscalls handlings and incorrect dispatching of calls. The First Selectman stated he does not know as of yet which service they will be utilizing with expense being looked into but they may just stay with Williamntic Switchboard.

PUBLIC WORKS: Mowed ball fields, cemeteries; performed maintenance; cleaned gutters. Mr. Curran commented that the ball fields look nice. Mr. Maters stated the new mower works well. Mr. Curran inquired about the walking track being all grass and suggested it being rototilled. Mr. Postler suggested spraying the walking track. Mr. Matters stated spray was purchased but the Recreation Commission does not want to pay for it therefore they will not be using it.

SENIOR CENTER: The contractor did work earlier that day and should be done this week. Then the Building Inspector and Fire Marshall can inspect and submit reports and the Certificate of Occupancy can be obtained. After that, the phone lines will be installed and furniture moved in and then it should be ready.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS-

A) APPROVAL OF TAX REFUNDS-

Henry and Theresa Eager for \$5.67. Mr. Postler made motion to approve. Mr. Curran seconded. Motion carried. Charles Shloff for \$7.80. Mr. Postler made motion to approve. Mr. Curran seconded. Motion carried. Edart Trucking for \$122.17. Mr. Postler made motion to approve. Mr. Curran seconded. Motion carried.

- B) APPROVAL OF PZC OPINION TO CHANGE STATE C&D PLAN-
- C. AUTHORIZATION OF FIRST SELECTMAN TO APPLY TO CT OPM ON STATE C&D PLAN- Town Planner Matt Davis stated B and C can all be covered together.

 Mr. Davis described his scope of work and budget under the technical services contract with Franklin. Based on discussion with the PZC, he determined that the most efficient use of limited funds is to focus on economic development initiatives. In reviewing Town's Zoning map, zoning regulations and C&D Plan, one area appeared to present a significant opportunity. Mr. Davis described the area, on its attributes and its environs. The PZC agreed the area should be rezoned for industrial development and rendered an affirmative opinion regarding an interim change to the State C&D Plan map. Mr. Davis described the OPM process for interim map changes and the relationship between the State C&D Plan and local development. He requested the BOS to approve the proposal and authorize Mr. Matters as the First Selectman to apply to CT OPM for the change on behalf of the BOS. Questions were asked with respect to other areas of the Town but it was the Board's consensus to consider those separately and based on PZC's deliberations. Mr. Postler made motion to approve. Mr. Curran seconded. Motion carried.
- D) APPROVAL OF SUBMISSION OF REGIONAL WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUBCOMMITTEE- Norwich Public Utilities is submitting a plan to the Governor's Infrastructure and Subcommittee upgrading and expanding water and waste water service to area Town's including Franklin. Mr. Matters requested support for this plan. Mr. Postler made motion to approve the plan. Mr. Curran seconded. Motion carried.
- E) APPOINTMENT TO EASTERN CT REGIONAL TOURISM DISTRICT- The First Selectman recommended Sandy Staebner to be Franklin's Representative for a three-year term. Mr. Postler made motion to approve. Mr. Curran seconded. Motion carried.
- F) APPROVAL OF PZC REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING- Due to utilizing the Town Planner in such a frequency, PZC needs additional funding as the Town Planner was allotted \$5,000 for the fiscal year. Mr. Postler made motion to approve. Mr. Matters seconded. Motion carried.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS FROM VISITORS: Mrs. Melanec inquired about when the Senior Center will be opening. Mr. Matters stated he is targeting by the end of the month. Mrs. Melanec also stated the Library looks good. Mr. Matters added the Library will be having a Book Sale on October 21 at the Hall at 5 Tyler Drive.

COMMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER: Mr. Curran stated the jogging track the Rec Commission is responsible for looks herotious and wants to know who is responsible for maintaining these projects that are taken on and nothing is done. He further stated the Foreman himself is not to blame. It was suggested rototilling or using stone dust. Mr. Postler added the pavilion will need a new roof in a couple years and who will be responsible for the funds of that.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SEPTEMBER 20th BOARD MEETING: None.

ADJOURNMENT- 8:22 PM Mr. Matters made motion to adjourn. Mr. Postler seconded. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED AND TRANSCRIBED,

JACQUELINE L. CARLISLE SECRETARY TO BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Town of Franklin Planning and Zoning Commission

Franklin Town Hall 7 Meeting House Hill Road Franklin, Connecticut 06254

Robert L. Genuario, Secretary CT Office of Policy and Management 450 Capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106-1308

August 24, 2006

Dear Mr. Genuario,

This letter is to inform you at the August 29, 2006 Planning and Zoning meeting, the Commission supports the change to the State of Connecticut Conservation and Development Plan.

Sincerely,

John McGuire John Toll Panning and Zoning Chairman

JM/jlc

Franklin Ydplan excerpt

At the elementary school property, there is a regulation softball field for use by either men or women, and also the Kahn Memorial Field, a regulation little league baseball field, jogging/walking track, and a soccer field.

It would seem that for a town of its size, Franklin has an excellent recreation program. Should the need arise for additional facilities, there is adequate land in Giddings Park to construct them. Any additional development of the park should first provide sufficient on-site parking plans in the future to enlarge and grade school side parking lot for projected park uses, with safe access to and from Route 207.

SEWERS

Although most of Franklin now utilizes on-site septic systems, and this situation is expected to continue for the foreseeable future, there is one location where a public sewer system is currently available, and another where such a system might become available in the future. The area adjacent to Route 32 and New Park Avenue, which borders on the Norwich Industrial Park, can be served by the Norwich system. In fact, the interceptor line of that system runs through Franklin for a short distance before crossing the border into the Yantic section of Norwich. Also, the Sprague interceptor extends westward from Baltic along Route 207 to within a mile of the Franklin town line. The interceptor, which was built in recent years, has excess capacity, so that it can serve expected development in that area. However, there are no present plans to extend this interceptor into Franklin at public expense.

ELDERLY HOUSING

As in other towns in Southeastern Connecticut, it is becoming more and more difficult for elderly people on fixed incomes to continue to live in their houses. This is because of increasing costs, not only of housing itself but of the necessary services that elderly people require. The Town has appointed committees to study this subject. The purposes were to establish the true need for elderly housing and possible means of providing it, should it be found desirable to do so. No conclusions were reached. The Town will continue to pursue ways of providing the service.

EXISTING ROAD SYSTEM

With only minor additions or realignments, the system of roads serving Franklin is the same as it was twenty years ago. There is a total of 39.5 miles of roads, of which 17.2 miles are state highways and 22.03 miles are Town Roads.

Franklin roads fall into three basic functional categories: arterial highways, collector roads, and local access roads. The classification of each road in the Town and the number of miles in each category is shown in Figure 7. The arterial highways are all state numbered highways, including Route 32, 87, 207 and 610. Although their primary purpose is the movement of traffic through the Town, arterials have an important secondary function, namely, providing access to abutting properties.

The second category of roads in Franklin is the collector. These roads channel traffic from significant development areas toward the arterial highways. They also serve as

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It should be pointed out here that existing development in Franklin is generally located in areas where there are few natural resource constraints. One of the most important types of development in the Town is the road system, which not only serves existing development but also was located where construction was relatively straightforward.

RESIDENTIAL

There are presently about 700 residences in the Town of Franklin. This is an increase of 34 since 1990, 130 since 1989, 148 since 1980 and 280 since 1971. This trend indicates a slowing of the building of new homes. The homes built have located on lots fronting on existing Town roads or State highways. The road system clearly remains the dominant influence on residential locations.

By far, the predominant residential type is the detached single-family, site-built dwelling. Buildings containing more than one dwelling unit are few in numbers and there are no concentrations of such housing types.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Although the amount of land actually owned by business and industrial activities in Franklin may be much greater, it is estimated that 293 acres are actually devoted to such uses. These uses range in type from small, retail stores, to business offices, to the extensive structures and grounds used by the Town's several agri-businesses.

The obvious focus of, and attraction for, businesses in Franklin is Route 32. This busy highway not only offers easy access for customers and employees, but it also provides visual exposure to thousands of potential customers in passing vehicles each day.

A significant proportion of the businesses in Franklin are related to agriculture. These include three large feed mills, the mushroom farm/building, and the egg-producing and processing activities. These uses, in turn, support (either directly or indirectly) the extensive dairy and beef farming business in Franklin and neighboring towns, particularly Lebanon. The feed mills provide feed not only for the cows, but also for the poultry and horses. The farmers use the poultry manure as fertilizer on fields that produce additional feed for their herds. These complementary relationships and the close proximity of the agri-businesses should support a continuation of such uses in Franklin and may even attract additional related uses.

Land uses in Franklin also have been strongly influenced by the Central Vermont Railroad, in terms of both location and type. No less than four rail sidings have been constructed, serving five individual businesses. The Kofkoff and Nutrena companies each have direct rail access. These also have frontage on, or convenient access to, Route 32.

The full potential of rail service as it relates to economic development has not been realized in Franklin. Additional sidings could be constructed to serve commercial and industrially zoned vacant land in both the southern and northern ends of the Town. This mode of transportation is unavailable to most municipalities in eastern Connecticut

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and should be carefully considered and pursued as a key ingredient in any economic development effort.

New businesses and expansions of existing businesses have occurred throughout the Town in recent years, but no area compares with the southeast corner of the Town in terms of the number of new activities. Good highway access, rail access, visual exposure to a large amount of traffic on Route 32, and proximity to a large consumer market in Norwich have combined to draw new uses to this area.

RESERVED OPEN SPACE

The state-owned Franklin Swamp Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is the largest separate land holding in Franklin. Occupying almost 600 acres, it extends for a distance of almost two and one-half miles in a north-south direction through the center of the Town. Most of the WMA is wooded, although a large area north of Plains Road is used for growing crops.

Other open space in Franklin includes parts of the Pautipaug Country Club golf course (68 acres) off Holton Road, along the Sprague town line; 20 acres of the Pease Brook WMA in the extreme southwest corner of the Town, the 4-H Camp on Kahn Road, Nature Conservancy, Bailey's Ravine (79 acres) and Giddings Park, a 90-acre parcel of Town-owned land across from the school on Route 207. The latter parcel provides facilities for organized sports, and it is the site of the Town garage. It borders on the Franklin Swamp WMA and contains considerable acreage for additional Town recreation facilities in the future.

OTHER USES

Other uses serving the community are scattered throughout the Town. The Elementary School, Volunteer Fire Department, the Post Office, and the Town Hall are on widely separated sites, with no relationship to residential concentrations. Like the other nonresidential uses in Franklin, each establishment is dependent exclusively on separate vehicle trips for its use. This category also includes the Town cemetery on Route 207 to the east of Giddings Park and the Congregational Church cemetery on Under-the-Mountain Road. Total area of uses in the grouping is about 45 acres.

UNDEVELOPED WOODLAND

Over 8,000 acres consist of undeveloped, privately-owned woodlands. 1,567.92 acres are recorded forest with the Office of the Assessor. Because of the hilly terrain, much of this lies on steep slopes or on poorly drained valley floors, but there remains an abundance of buildable wooded acreage that can accommodate community growth far into the future without infringement on the open fields that contribute to the scenic rural character of the Town today. In other parts of this planning process, a closer look will be taken of the physical characteristics that will influence and play a key role in determining where development of these undeveloped lands should be encouraged or discouraged.

CHAPTER III

STATEMENT OF PLANNING GOALS

The basic purpose of the planning process is to provide an environment for Franklin's residents that is healthy, attractive, and socially and economically sound. A fundamental objective is to preserve the Town's natural attractiveness and rural character. The following goals will support this objective:

- Protect natural drainage features, major groundwater supplies, environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources.
- Preserve the Town's natural attractiveness by encouraging good agricultural and forestry practices and discouraging development on steep slopes.
- Consider the physical capabilities of the land and the lack of public water and sewer systems in most areas of the Town in determining future development types and densities.
- Consider the existing transportation network and existing development in determining future development patterns.
- Provide a variety of residential densities that are environmentally sound and will meet the needs of all of Franklin's residents.
- Provide opportunities for a variety of housing types and residential settings.
- Add strength and variety to the local tax base by encouraging new commercial and industrial activities in areas that will not negatively affect the health, safety and general welfare of the residents.
- Provide areas for commercial development that will meet the needs of such development but will also enable the rural character of the Town and the capacity of the highway network to be preserved.
- Encourage industrial development in appropriate areas, with regulatory safeguards to eliminate adverse impacts on other land uses.

